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MICRO-TEACHING AT BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY.

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MICROTEACHING IS THE CREATION OF A MINIATURE TEACHING SITUATION UNDER EASILY CONTROLLED CONDITIONS, WITH IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK FOR THE STUDENT TEACHER. ONE HUNDRED FORTY STUDENTS IN SIX METHODS COURSES EACH TEACH A SELF-CONTAINED 4- TO 6-MINUTE LESSON ON A SINGLE, SPECIFIC CONCEPT TO A "CLASS" OF THREE TO FIVE LOCAL STUDENTS AT THE APPROPRIATE GRADE AND AGE LEVEL. THE METHODS CLASS AND THEIR INSTRUCTOR ARE PRESENT, AND THE STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE IS VIDEOTAPED. BOTH THE CLASS AND THE COLLEGE STUDENTS COMPLETE EVALUATION FORMS. ONE FORM ASKS--"WHAT SPECIFIC IDEA WAS THE TEACHER TRYING TO TEACH," "DID YOU LEARN IT," "WERE YOU INTERESTED IN THE LESSON," AND "HOW COULD THE TEACHER HAVE DONE BETTER." EVALUATION INVOLVES, FIRST, A GENERAL, USUALLY POSITIVE, DISCUSSION OF THE PERFORMANCE AND THEN PLAYBACK OF THE VIDEOTAPE, WITH MORE DETAILED AND CRITICAL COMMENTS BY THE TRAINEE, THE INSTRUCTOR, AND THE COLLEGE CLASS. THE PROCEDURE IS REPEATED MORE BRIEFLY WHEN THE TRAINEE RETEACHES THE LESSON TO A DIFFERENT GROUP OF PUPILS. CONCLUSIONS CONCERN (1) THE POTENTIAL USEFULNESS OF A VIDEOTAPE BANK, FROM WHICH TAPES COULD BE DRAWN FOR PARTICULAR PURPOSES AT VARIOUS STAGES OF TRAINING, (2) THE VIDEOTAPING OF "LIVE" STUDENT TEACHING, AND (3) THE DEVELOPMENT OF DESIRABLE SELF-CONCEPTS AMONG STUDENT TEACHERS VIA COMBINING VIDEOTAPE TACTICS WITH TRAINING IN INTERACTION ANALYSIS. (RP)

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AT BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

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Definition

Micro-teaching is a recent development in teacher education in which a miniature teaching situation is created under controlled conditions. All of the elements of the teaching act are present. The uniqueness of micro-teaching consists of two elements: (1) the ease with which the teaching situation can be controlled and manipulated, and (2) the availability of immediate feedback for the student teacher.

History

The term micro-teaching was coined at Stanford University to describe teacher education procedures developed in connection with the Ford Foundation financed Secondary Education Project of the university.

Teacher education personnel at Stanford have conceived of micro-teaching as a way to break down the complex act of teaching into simpler components. Today micro-teaching, at least in principle, is being used in several institutions of higher learning in the United States.

At Brigham Young University micro-teaching has been the subject of experimentation for several months. During the 1966 spring semester, 140 students in six teacher education classes engaged in micro-teaching sessions. The current summer session (1966) has seen its use with some 50 students in three classes.

What has been found has proved encouraging to the degree that the principle of micro-teaching is considered an integral part of the B.Y.U. teacher education program, whatever direction its ultimate development might follow.

Current Practice at B.Y.U.

A typical micro-teaching session in a secondary methods class, for example, would proceed about as follows (refer to Appendix A where necessary): the student teacher, having been scheduled beforehand, would be prepared to present a four- to six-minute lesson to a "class" composed of three to five local high school students. This brief presentation would have as its aim the teaching of a single specific concept. It would be intended as a self-contained lesson and not simply the first four to six minutes of a longer segment. With the student teacher and the volunteer "class" in the college classroom are the other members of the trainee's college teacher education class and the course instructor. Occasionally, a second instructor is present to assist in the evaluation.

As the student teacher presents his lesson, his performance is recorded on video tape. The video camera and video tape recorder are operated by a student from the Broadcast Services department of the university. A television monitor operates during the taping, allowing the cameraman to adjust his shooting angle or focus and the college students to have two views of the teacher and his "class." The instructor-evaluator observes the trainee's teaching effort critically and jots down suggestions for improvement and commendations. At the conclusion of the lesson, the "class" members are asked to leave and both they and the college class complete forms evaluating the student teacher's performance. (See appendix B for a sample evaluation form.)

To begin the evaluation, the instructor and the student discuss in a general, usually positive, way the student's performance. The instructor may make suggestions about what to look for during the video tape playback. Then, the video tape is replayed and the trainee, instructor, and college class observe it and comment freely. If desired, a particular segment may be replayed, and also a "stop action" process may be used. Specific suggestions for improvement are sought by the evaluator. Such suggestions often are made first by the trainee himself. Practice at this point varies depending on the needs of the trainee as perceived by the instructor-evaluator. Sometimes a somewhat harsh, almost negative approach produces the best results; more often a positive, encouraging tone is adopted.

One of the aims of the evaluation session is to prepare the trainee to reteach his lesson. Sometimes this is accomplished immediately after the evaluation, other times it may be from one day to a week later. The reteaching always is done with volunteer students other than those who participated in the original "class." This "reteach" segment is video taped and all conditions are as they were for the initial presentation. Again, evaluation forms are filled out by the "class" and by the trainee's fellow students. (The actual procedure has been to use dittoed evaluation forms for the "class" members and to ask the college students to write down their comments on a blank sheet of paper.) The evaluation of the "reteach" portion of micro-teaching is briefer than the initial evaluation, and the monitor is used sparingly.

Currently at B.Y.U., micro-teaching principles are utilized more informally than will likely be the case in the future. Instructors in six different teacher education courses have applied micro-teaching in their classes. The final judgment as to where to introduce micro-teaching in the teacher education sequence and to what degree to use it has not been made.

Some Implications for the Future

The principle of a scaled-down teaching situation and particularly the freedom allowed by video tapes lead to exciting considerations of possible future applications of these methods. Although many other ideas could be advanced, three areas of application will be suggested here:

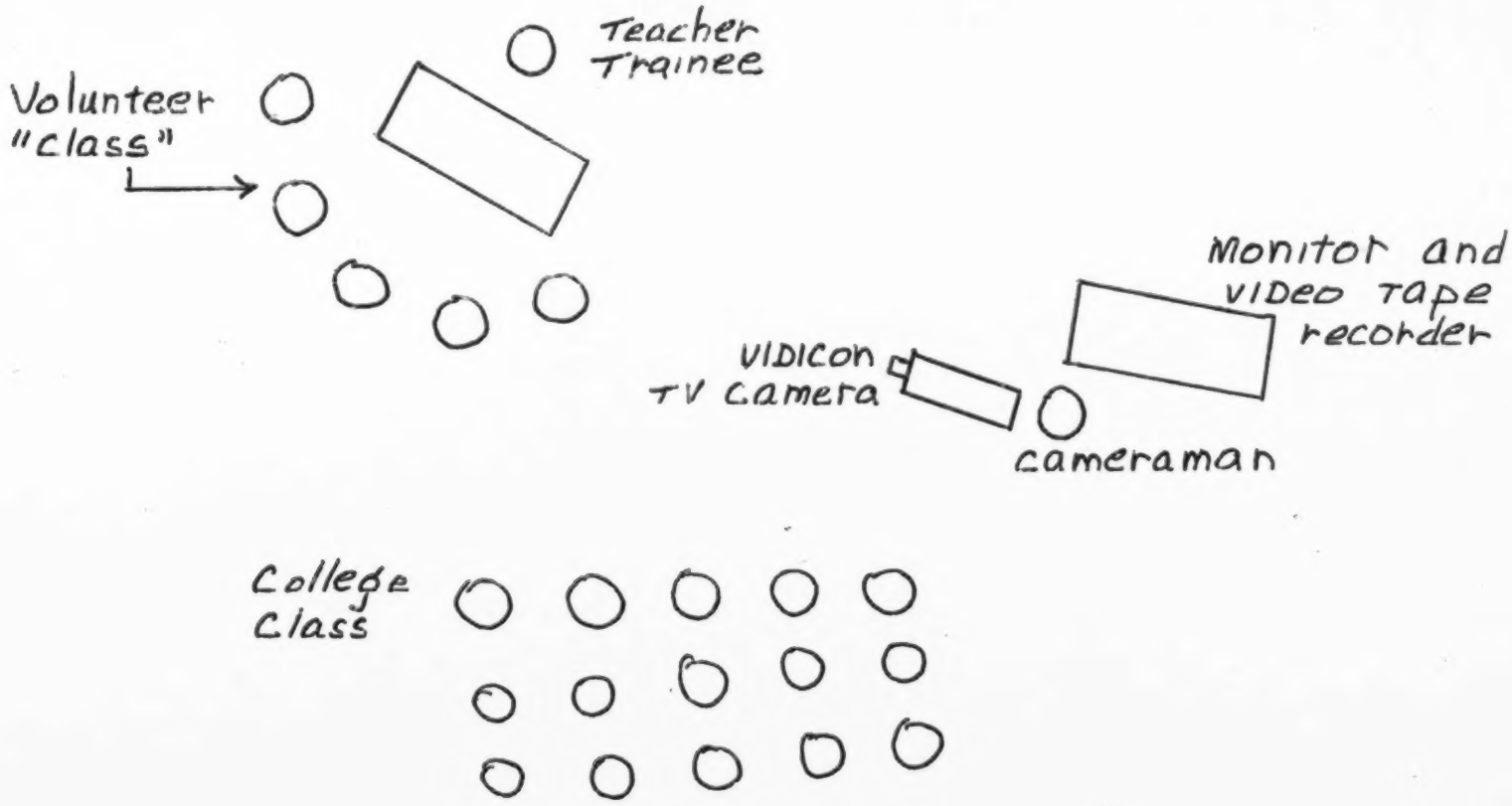
1. The video tape bank. Video tapes of specific teaching sequences could be stored for immediate retrieval for specific purposes. For example, varied classroom situations could be video taped, according to grade level or socio-economic criteria or any other appropriate classification. These could be drawn from the bank when in the teacher education sequence the instructor wanted the student teachers to learn about a particular situation. Again, as an aid to the trainee in overcoming "reality shock" sequences on video tape could be shown in the college classroom. Another use might be the presentation of excellent teaching sequences or even their counterpart, poor teaching examples. A bank of video-tapes would not be helpful only to the college instructor, but also to a supervisor of in-service teachers. Video tapes illustrating problems of motivation, readiness, and adjustment on the part of pupils could be utilized with training teachers and with in-service teachers.

2. The student teacher on the job. Observation of student teaching could enter a new phase with the video tape process. Of course, the micro-teaching process described in this paper could take place in the elementary or secondary school room as it did in the college classroom. Additionally, evaluation sessions could be held at the college using a video tape made "on location." A further possibility would be the video taping of the student teacher's future student teaching assignment. That is, the class he would be teaching as a student teacher would be video taped with its regular teacher and played back for the trainee's benefit. Significant time saving could be a result of this application.

3. The student teacher and his self-concept. One of the dramatic results of the micro-teaching experiments so far at B.Y.U. has been the student's intense reaction to his viewing himself on video tape and receiving immediate feedback relative to his performance. The combining of these tools with that of interaction analysis could be a behavior-changing force of powerful influence. Timid, diffident trainees can be reinforced by the instructor in micro-teaching in ways that will build self-confidence. Conversely, cocky, over-confident trainees can quickly be shown reality.

Granting the assumption that conceptual learning proceeds more effectively as contact with the referent is increased, micro-teaching assuredly will take on greater and greater importance as it is realized that this technique provides just that: increased contact with the referent, teaching.

(Appendix A)



typical micro-teaching
classroom arrangement

(Appendix B)

MICRO-TEACHING
(Form 1)

1. What specific idea was the teacher trying to teach?

2. Did you learn it?

3. Were you interested in the lesson?

4. How could the teacher have done better?